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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who has created humanity in Your image, look upon us and hear our prayers. Today, give our lawmakers the desire to do Your will and the energy to complete the tasks that will glorify Your Name. That which they don't know, reveal it. That which they lack, supply it. And that which they doubt, verify it. Keep them blameless in Your service, so that their lives will be living letters that will cause people to exalt Your Name. Strengthen their minds for Your service, so that Your wisdom will permeate their every endeavor. Remind them to not forget the lost, the lonely, the least, the last, and the left out.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 20, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAND PAUL, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PAUL thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5895, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Shelby amendment No. 2910, in the nature of a substitute.

Alexander amendment No. 2911 (to amendment No. 2910), to make a technical correction.

McConnell (for Crapo) modified amendment No. 2943 (to amendment No. 2910), to increase funds for a nuclear demonstration program.

McConnell (for Baldwin/Portman) amendment No. 2985 (to amendment No. 2910), to set aside funds for cooperative agreements and laboratory support to accelerate the domestic production of Molybdenum-99.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as I discussed on the floor yesterday, returning to regular order in the appropriations process is at the forefront of the Senate's agenda.

Thanks to the bipartisan work of the Appropriations Committee, led by Chairman SHELBY, Ranking Member LEAHY, and the subcommittee chairmen, it is actually becoming a reality. Their efforts have already produced thoughtful legislation for the full Senate to consider, beginning this week with the combined measures for the Legislative Branch, for Energy and Water, and for Military Construction and the Veterans Administration. It is those last components I would like to discuss this morning.

This year, 2018, has already brought significant legislative progress for America's men and women in uniform. Earlier this year, Congress and the President did away with arbitrary funding limits that had eroded our forces' comparative advantage. We delivered the largest year-on-year increase in funding for our troops in 15 years. Now, with the Military Construction-VA funding bill before us this week, the Senate can keep the ball rolling.

The committee's package would deliver mission-critical maintenance and improvements that are needed on installations both at home and abroad. It would support Active-Duty personnel, as well as National Guard and Reserve units. It would allocate significant resources for projects that reinforce key alliances and extend our influence around the world.

In my home State of Kentucky, it would mean major improvements to training facilities at both Fort Knox—home of the Army Cadet, Human Resources, and Recruiting Commands—and at Fort Campbell, where the 101st Airborne Division and Special Operations forces prepare for evolving missions.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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